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probable consequences of the supposably analogous movement of the present. The most striking result of each of the two earlier movements was its indirect influence on the whole social organization, leading to the reform of social abuses, a greater feeling of earnestness and personal responsibility.

If, therefore, our time is to be one of revolutionary change, if some of the elements of the new order can already be detected, the teaching of the past is all such as to make the fact a matter for rejoicing. Greater possibilites for mankind, as individuals and as nations, more substantial justice, wider distribution of the benefits and opportunities of life, higher ideals and broader sympathies, have accompanied each of the great steps of modern emancipation, and may be justly hoped for in even greater degree from a step in advance in the economic world.

Morning Session, December 30.

The Development of Publicity.

BY PROF. DAVIS R. DEWEY OF THE MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY.

This paper was devoted to a consideration of the development of publicity in recent times and the possible extension of the principle in industrial and social affairs. An introduction was made by showing the development of the American census in its attempts to get detailed information. Originally in 1790 the census was a simple return of the population performed to fulfil the constitutional provisions for

determining political representation. Since then, step by step, other inquiries have been added in regard to age, defectives, educational qualifications, to say nothing of the investigations of agriculture, manufactures and commerce. It was shown that this great extension in the census investigation was not made without a struggle, but that little by little, the public has acquiesced in the demands, indicating that progress may be made by repeated insistance for information on the part of the public authorities, and also by the continued discussion of the advantages to be thereby derived. The growth of the English census was also taken as an instructive example of the same progress.

Attention was then called to the status of publicity outside of the operations of the census. The American local tax system was seen to rest fundamentally upon the idea of publicity. Whatever fiscal objections may be brought against the taxation of personal property, this is nevertheless a principle which is thoroughly endorsed by the American people. Our popular legislatures repeatedly demand that a more perfect listing of personal property should be made, and that all evasion shall be severely punished. The popular objection against the income tax has been largely promoted by latent hatred of every manifestation of Federal power.

Corporations are not permitted by law to have secrets, and although many corporations have clothed themselves with mystery, this is due not to the fact that the public has any respect for a corporation's personality, but to the ignorance of the public as to the best method of getting at the information desired. The degree of publicity now demanded in

regard to health interests was next taken up. It was noted that here again there had been a great change in public sentiment, and that State laws implied a degree of publicity which would astonish many if the demands came from the Federal government instead of from local authorities.

Attention was then directed to instances of *voluntary* publicity as opposed to compulsory publicity; and reference was made to those examples in which groups of society find it to their mutual interest to render up a certain amount of private information, to a common central agent, in order to derive, in return, information as to the acts of others. Of this nature are mercantile agencies for reporting business credits; the coöperation of insurance companies in forming mortality tables, of farmers and planters in making monthly returns of their crop prospects.

After thus showing the development of the idea of publicity, the question was raised as to the desirability of a further extension. Two lines were marked out: First, that public interest demands a greater knowledge of physiological phenomena; that public sentiment should not be content with supporting an inquiry as to the number of the deaf, blind, idiots and insane, but should support a public and official investigation of diseases in general, and more particularly of those which incapacitate large classes of society from earning their daily living. It was contended that this latter inquiry was of far more national importance than a census of defectives. Secondly, in industrial affairs, inquiry should be directed more particularly to the actual and possible productive capacity of industrial establishments, with a view, if possible, of adjusting the supply to

the demand for commodities. A large part of the present business depression, and of suffering by the industrial classes, is due to the bad adjustment of supply and demand, to the misdirection and poor investment of capital, and to ignorance of labor as to the best field for employment. It is of public interest that full data should be secured from all industrial establishments, in regard to the points suggested.

Municipal Ownership of Gas Works in the United States.

BY PROF. EDWARD W. BEMIS OF VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY.

Of the nine cities that now own and operate their gas works in this country, one, Hamilton, Ohio, a city of 20,000 inhabitants, has begun too recently to enable results to be given. The other eight, Philadelphia, Pa.; Wheeling, W. Va.; Bellefontaine, Ohio; Henderson, Ky., and four cities in Virginia—Richmond, Danville, Charlottesville and Alexandria, after a fair trial of many years, have recently refused to entertain good offers from private companies to take the works off their hands. There is most dispute about Philadelphia, which began ownership in 1841, and most foolishly placed the entire control of the works till 1886 in the hands of a self-perpetuating body of trustees; who, being free from responsibility to the people, a primary principle of public finance, naturally abused their powers and became a corrupt body. The bad results finally led to the overthrow of the trust in 1885 and the restoration of the works